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著者	Sakiyama Naoki
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Dublin Merchants and the Irish Repeal Movement of the 1840s.

Naoki Sakiyama

*Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Chiba University*

Abstract

This paper is concerned with Dublin Merchants and the Repeal movement. The Repeal movement, which demanded the legislative independence of Ireland, spilt over not only onto the whole island, but also a part of the United Kingdom and the United States. By discussing various topics such as “Municipal Corporation Reform”, “Repeal Wardens” and “Repeal Reading Rooms”, I attempt to explain the role of Dublin Merchants in the movement. Especially, I emphasise the “Dublin Remonstrance” as a reform of the Repeal movement. In the “Dublin Remonstrance”, Dublin Merchants criticised the Repeal Association. This became the original motive for the establishment of the Irish Confederation in 1847.

1. Introduction

The Repeal movement of the 1840s is considered to be the origin of Irish cultural nationalism, since Irish historians emphasise the role of Young Ireland. For example, John Hutchinson positioned it as a precursor to the Gaelic revival at the turn of the century (Hutchinson, 1987, pp. 74-114). Richard Davis also shows in full detail how Young Ireland supported the Repeal movement. He regards Young Ireland as the Cult of Irish Nationalism. He indicates that Young Ireland affected later Irish Nationalists such as Patrick Pearse and Arthur Griffith (Davis, 1987, pp. 230-243).

The aim of this paper is to examine the Repeal movement from the point of view of Dublin merchants. This drives us to the question of why Dublin merchants supported or joined the Repeal movement. We can define the purpose of Repeal as not only Irish independence, but also the restoration of the Irish Parliament, which was abolished in 1800 under the Act of Union. What kind of merits did Dublin merchants recognise through the achievement of the Repeal of the Union?

Numerous attempts have been made by scholars to show the details of the Repeal movement. Jacqueline R. Hill pays attention to “Dublin inhabitants” as the subject of Irish Nationalism (Hill, 1973). However she errs in casting the Repeal movement as a solid organisation. The Repeal Association, which was an organisation for the Repeal movement, changed according to the condition of the Repeal movement and situation in Ireland. I divide the Repeal movement into three periods. The first period, named the early Repeal movement, covers the years from its inception to 1843, known as the “Repeal Year”. The period named the middle Repeal movement, was from 1843 to 1846, the year of the “Peace Resolution” and disruption of the Repeal Association. The final period, named the later Repeal movement, was from 1846 to 1848, the year of the rising by Young Ireland.

Some researchers, such as Christine Kinealy, give an overview through the use of these three periods of the Repeal movement, but they emphasize the later Repeal movement, especially the movement in 1848. Besides this, Kinealy tries to connect the Repeal movement with the Chartist

movement, and describes the Repeal movement as a “revolution” (Kinealy, 2009, pp. 129-182.). However, before 1847, when Young Ireland established their own organisation, the Irish Confederation, the Repeal movement had no scheme for joining with the English Chartists.

We should consider that each of the periods of the Repeal movement were different from the others. Therefore, we will start by examining each of them in detail. Additionally, we should regard the Repeal movement as a multitier movement; several social groups gathered together in the movement for their own purposes. I choose Dublin merchants as a subject of the movement and explain how these merchants took part in the movement and gained certain benefits during the three periods of the movement.

2. Before the Repeal Year – Municipal Corporation Reform and Dublin Merchants.

When The Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 became law, the Catholic Association, led by Daniel O’Connell, achieved the success it had aspired to. The emancipation meant the right of Irish Catholics to sit as members of the British Parliament without having to subscribe to the Oath of Supremacy. The Catholic middle classes especially benefited from this reform. They could have new careers in the higher civil service, such as in the legal profession, as grand jurors, in universities and in the lower ranks of the army and judiciary. Some Catholics, such as Daniel O’Connell were able to take seats in the British Parliament (Clark, 1982, pp. 18-20.).¹

In 1835, the Lichfield House Compact was signed. This was an agreement between the Whig government, the Catholic Party and the Radicals to act as one body against the Conservative Party. In exchange for support of the British government by Irish members, O’Connell argued for the reformation of municipal corporations in Ireland, because Ireland had been excluded from the Municipal Corporation Act (1835) which had already been enacted. However, R. F. Foster regards this alliance between the government and O’Connell as having resulted in “limited and much criticized reforms in the area of Poor Law and Municipal Corporations” (Foster, 1988, p. 310), because the Irish Municipal Reform Act (1840) dissolved fifty-eight Municipal Corporations and reconstituted only ten. Certainly this Irish liberal reformation was limited and inadequate, but the plan was to prepare for the next political issue, “Repeal of the Union”, and the subjects who would support this movement. In this chapter, I will discuss the process of enactment of the Municipal Corporation Act (1840) and the formation of the Loyal Repeal Association in 1840.

Until the act, Irish Municipal Corporations were managed by the Freemen, from whom Irish Catholics were excluded. For example, the corporation of Dublin was composed of delegations from the Dublin Guilds. Each Dublin Guild had a fixed number of representatives, such that the Merchants Guild sent 31 members and the Tailors Guild sent four members to the Dublin Council. In total, 25 Dublin Guilds sent 96 representatives as town councillors to the Dublin Council (*The Dublin Almanac, and General Register of Ireland for the Year of our Lord 1841*, 1841, pp. 257-263).² In Dublin, only Freemen who were Anglicans could join in the Guilds. Therefore Anglicans could take a hand in local politics in Dublin through the Dublin Guilds. Moreover the Dublin Guilds had commercial privileges such as exemptions from tolls and business licenses (Clark and Refaüssé, 1993, pp. 11-31).

¹ However, Robert Peel curbed the power of the Irish Catholics by disfranchising the Forty-shilling freeholders, who had been the mainstay of the Catholic emancipation movement, by raising the qualification for the franchise to possession of property with a rateable valuation of £10.

² Hereafter cited as “*The Dublin Almanac 1841*”.

In 1835, John Russell drafted a new law named “an act to provide for the Regulation of Municipal Corporation in England and Wales”. This act aimed to abolish the privileges of freemen and guilds and to reform the system of local government in England and Wales. However, Ireland was excluded. After the Lichfield House Compact, the alliance between the Whigs and O’Connell attempted to enact a new law for Irish municipal corporations.

After 1835, the Whigs and Irish members drafted the Irish Municipal Corporation bill six times, but these were all rejected. In 1840, however, the situation concerning the bill shifted due to Robert Peel’s decision to cooperate with the Whigs for enacting the bill. Peel considered that Irish Catholics had already affected the parliamentary election, especially in the city districts. He regarded Irish Catholics as one of the partners for the reformation of liberalism. Therefore he chose to help in the enactment of the bill (*Hansard’s Parliamentary Debate*, vol. LII., 1840, pp. 265-72).³

Other Conservatives, however, would not easily permit the bill, since they regarded it as a religious problem in Ireland. For example, R. Inglis said, “It would be a heavy blow and a great discouragement to the Protestant religion in Ireland”. (*Hansard’s*, vol. LII., p. 250).

In Ireland, the Protestants shared the same opinion. For example, the mayor of Dublin, aldermen, sheriffs and Town councillors presented a petition for rejection of the bill. Moreover the Dublin Corporation sent Isaac Butt⁴ who was an alderman of Dublin, to parliament as a spokesman. He delivered a speech in the House of Lords. In the speech, he called the bill a “Bill of Pains and Penalties”, and argued for the protection of Irish Protestants (Butt, 1840, p. 3).

On the other side, O’Connell began to establish an association for the Repeal of the Union, because his interest had shifted from enacting the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill to the next Irish issue. From the 1830s, O’Connell often argued the importance of the Repeal of the Union in the House of Commons (McCaffrey, 1966, p. 9). However, this was limited to statements within the parliament, and he did not establish any organisation for the movement. In 1840, however, he became determined to organise an association for the Repeal. In April, he sent a letter to Rev. MacHale, who had once collaborated with him in the Catholic Emancipation movement and was now Archbishop of Tuam, for joining the new association, which was called the “Justice or Repeal Association”. O’Connell defined the issues of the Repeal movement as the “the payment and support by the State in Ireland of the Church of the minority of the Irish People”, “the omission to give the Irish full corporate reform”, “the omission to give the Irish people the same political franchises which the people of England enjoy” and “the omission to give the people of Ireland an adequate share of parliamentary representation” (O’Connell, 1980, pp. 320-323). He evaluated the new movement as an obvious succession of the Catholic Emancipation Movement at the time, because his standpoint tended to the side of Catholics. He attempted to become an advocate of Irish Catholics who wanted “Justice for Ireland”. In addition, O’Connell demanded the reformation of the Municipal Corporation and political franchise. He connected the repeal of the union with the political reformation taken by Irish Catholics. On 15th, April 1840, the “National Association of Ireland for full and prompt Justice or Repeal” was established in Dublin.⁵

The British Parliament had a sense of impending crisis concerning the activation of O’Connell and the situation in Ireland. This sense affected deliberations on the Irish Municipal Corporation Bill. The House of Lords made an amendment to the bill limiting the number of Irish Corporations

³ Hereafter cited as “*Hansard’s*”.

⁴ Butt was born in Donegal in 1813 and educated at Trinity College Dublin. From 1833-38, he edited a monthly magazine, the Dublin University Magazine. He was the first professor of political economy at Trinity College Dublin (1836-41). In the early 1840s, his standpoint was on the side of the Unionists. He was one of the opponents of O’Connell and the repeal movement. After the Great Famine, his political opinions underwent a change in favour of support for the Repeal movement.

⁵ In July 1840, this association was renamed “The Loyal National Repeal Association”.

that could adopt the bill. At this time, there were 68 municipal corporations in Ireland, but only ten corporations⁶ would be able to adopt this reformation. In addition, The Lord Lieutenant was given the power of appointing sheriffs in Dublin (*Hansard's*, Vol. LIII, p. 1168). In August 1840, the Municipal Corporation Act for Ireland was passed.

What kind of changes did the Municipal Corporation Act for Ireland bring to the social situation in Ireland? Let us consider the situation in Dublin after the act. Before 1840, Dublin Corporation consisted of 24 Aldermen⁷ and 96 Common Councillors under the Lord Mayor, but after 1841, Dublin was divided into 15 wards. In each ward, the people who received the electoral franchise elected three Common Councillors and one Alderman (Hill, 1973, p. 171).⁸ Thus the New Dublin Corporation consisted of 15 Aldermen and 45 Town Councillors. Turning our attention to the ratio of the political parties in the new corporation, before 1840, every Dublin Alderman and Common Councillor belonged to the Anglican Church and supported the Conservatives. However this situation was altered such that in 1841, only 13 were supporters of the Conservatives (Butt, 1840, p. 3) (Hill, 1997, p. 368).⁹ On the other hand, the number of supporters of the Liberals increased to 11. Moreover, O'Connell's supporters numbered 34. The O'Connell's supporters, who were called O'Connellites, held the majority in the new corporation. Needless to say, O'Connell was elected as Alderman from the Merion Square Ward, and assumed the office of the Lord Mayor. The case of Dublin was one of the symbols of the reformation of the municipal corporations in Ireland.

There is one further change in the Dublin Corporation that we must not ignore. It is the occupations of the Aldermen and Town Councillors. Before the reformation, the Dublin Corporation was organized by the Dublin Guilds, which permitted by only Anglo-Irish, but the reformation invested Catholics with a franchise to participate in local government. Therefore, the merchants as a social group enhanced their importance in Dublin. In 1841, 41 of 60 Town Councillors were merchants. Especially the grocers, of whom 13 persons were elected, were the largest component of the social group (Hill, 1997, pp. 205-6). Through the reformation, Dublin merchants were able to hold local political power, and therefore circumstances within the social group were changing. Before the reformation, the Dublin merchants participating in the Guilds supported the Conservatives, but not all of them were elected after the reformation. On the other hand, the Dublin merchants newly elected as Town Councillors supported the alliance between the Liberals and O'Connellites. Therefore we can consider the Irish Municipal Corporation Act not only as a reformation of local government, but also as a competition for initiative between Anglo-Irish merchants who were members of the Guilds and Catholic merchants who became eligible for election. The Catholic merchants, who could be regarded as the middle class, then gained control of Dublin politics after 1841.

The Irish Municipal Corporation Act was positioned one of a series of reformations by the Liberals from 1830s, such as the reformation of the electoral franchise and the poor law. In addition to that, it was an important trigger in the development of the Repeal movement, which claimed the granting to Ireland of an equal position to England, or Justice for Ireland. As a result, wealthy men who lived in towns, almost all of whom were Catholics were able to take part in local governance as Town councillors or Aldermen. Thus they continued not only to demand additional powers, but also

⁶ The ten corporations were the following: Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Belfast, Waterford, Kilkenny, Londonderry, Drogheda, and Clonmel.

⁷ Aldermen, whose term of office was for life, were elected by mutual vote of the Freeman.

⁸ Candidates for the Corporation had to own one thousand pounds' worth of property, and inhabit a house rated at twenty-five pounds. From these requirements, we can consider the candidates as comparatively wealthy men.

⁹ Before the reformation, Butt estimated the number of Conservatives likely to be elected as seven. However his prediction was off the mark. The reason why some Dublin Protestants were able to hold onto their seats, as Hill has pointed out, is that they promoted registration on the electoral roll.

protection of trade or industrial promotion through support for the Repeal movement. It would seem that these economic demands were an area of interest of non-Catholic merchants which had caused them some considerable concern till 1843.

3. The Repeal Year and the Three Days' Discussion in the Dublin Corporation.

Under the Lord Mayor, O'Connell, the new Town Councillors controlled the Dublin Corporation. At the same time, O'Connell carried out propaganda for the Repeal of the Union by publishing a large number of pamphlets through the Repeal Association. In addition, a newspaper named *The Nation* was established in 1842. It soon became the newspaper with the largest circulation in Ireland (*The Nation*, October 12, 1844, April 20, 1844) (Duffy, 1896, pp. 39-41). *The Nation* took on a key role in the encouragement for the Repeal Movement. Especially the articles written by Thomas Davis¹⁰ not only provided readers with an ideal framework for the Repeal movement, but also cultivated national feelings for Ireland at that time (Mulvey, 2003, pp. 101-141).

In this situation, O'Connell was determined to start to play a new active role. At first, he called this year the "Repeal Year". He then inspired the Repealers and local municipal corporations which had been reformed by the Irish Municipal Corporation Act, to propose a motion for a petition for the Repeal of the Union. In this chapter, I will take up the case of Dublin in order to explain the debate about the petition for the Repeal of the Union in the Dublin Corporation. In addition I will focus on an organisation named the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin concerning the relationship between O'Connell and the Dublin Corporation.

Let us start by considering the situation in the Dublin Corporation in 1843. Hill shows in full detail how the Conservatives, Liberals and O'Connellites shared the town councillor seats between them in Dublin. In her studies, the O'Connellites, which commanded a majority in the Dublin Corporation, had 41 seats including two Protestants. The Conservatives, which opposed O'Connell and tried to protect the vested interests of the Anglo-Irish, had 11 seats. On the other hand, the situation of the Liberals in Dublin was difficult because the alliance between O'Connell and the Liberals was collapsing. There were eight Liberals including three Protestants (Hill, 1973, p. 187).

Let us now turn to the occupations of the Aldermen and Town Councillors. Of 15 Aldermen, the occupation of merchant, which included tobacconist, was in the largest component with seven. Following that were the landowners, of whom there were four. There were two professionals, which I define as barrister-at-law, one brewer and one hotel owner (*The Dublin Almanac*, 1843, pp. 253-254) (*Dublin Council Minutes Book*, 1843).

Of the 45 Town Councillors, the occupation of merchant, which included grocer, silk merchant, tobacconist, timber merchant, feather merchant and hide merchant, was also the largest component with 19. Occupations concerned with manufacture, which included silversmith, tanner, tallow-chandler, distiller, miller, corn factor, baker, and iron founder, was the second social group in the council with nine. The third social group was the professionals, which numbered eight and included at least one each of the occupations of attorney at law, barrister, solicitor, architect and doctor. The remaining nine cannot be specified, but it is assumed that all of them were landowners since they bore the title "Esquire" (*The Dublin Almanac*, 1843, pp. 253-254, 652, 675, 732.) (*Thom's Almanac*, 1850, pp. 889, 1017).

On 28th February, 1843, Daniel O'Connell, who held a seat as an Alderman in Dublin, brought

¹⁰ Thomas Osborne Davis (1814-1845) was born in Mallow, Co. Cork. After graduating Trinity College Dublin in 1836, he was called to the bar in 1838, and began to contribute to *The Citizen* and *Public Morning Register*. In 1841, he joined the Loyal National Repeal Association.

a motion for discussion of the question of Repeal into the Assembly House (Levy, 1843, p. 8). For three days, the Dublin Aldermen and Town Councillors debated the issue of the Repeal of the Union. In the discussion, Isaac Butt, who had represented the Anglo-Irish and opposed O'Connell in the House of Lords in 1840, also took the role of opponent and argued against O'Connell and Repeal of the Union. He is reported to have argued as follows.

He (Mr. Butt) could understand those who sought for separation; but he could not understand those who talked of national independence, and yet wished to recur to the constitution of 1782. It was easy to talk of a province and a nation; but if there were one situation on earth of a country to which the word province was strictly applicable, it was to the state of Ireland under this boasted constitution, a nation in name, without any of the functions or attributes of a nation, without a national executive, no place for her among the nations of the earth, without her fleets or her armies, no colonies, no ambassadors to other countries (Levy, 1843, p.80).

The Conservatives and a number of Liberals followed the opinion of Butt, and opposed the motion by O'Connell (Hill, 1973, p. 187) (Levy, 1843, p. 195).¹¹ In total, six Aldermen¹² and nine Town Councillors (*The Dublin Almanac*, 1843, pp. 253-254.) (*Dublin Council Minutes Book*, 1843)¹³ opposed the motion. We can find a correlation between the Alderman and the Town Councillors who were elected from same ward. Let us examine St. George's Ward as an example. The Alderman and all the Town Councillors from the ward opposed the motion, and three-fourths of them were engaged in occupations concerned with judicial circles. *The Dublin Almanac* of 1843 carried statistics on the ratio of religions in each Dublin parish. The total ratio of Protestants in Dublin was 25.7%, but the ratio in some parishes, for instance, Ann's Parish, differed from the average. St. George's parish was one of these Dublin parishes. It had the second highest rate of Protestant inhabitants at 40%. In addition, Town Councillor, Francis E. Thomas was a Churchwarden in St. George's Parish (*The Dublin Almanac*, 1843, pp. 585). We can find similar tendencies in a few Wards in which both Aldermen and Town Councillors opposed the motion. It seems reasonable to conclude that the citizens in some areas of Dublin which had a relatively higher ratio of Protestant inhabitants elected Protestant professionals as their representatives and not merchants who were members of the Dublin Guilds, which had composed the old Dublin Corporation. These Aldermen and Town Councillors acted to protect their privileges and oppose O'Connell and the Repeal movement.

On the other hand, the tendency of Dublin Catholics was different from the Protestants because there were too few professionals to stand as candidates in the election. Therefore Dublin Catholics entrusted local politics to Catholic merchants. One body of merchants especially, the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin, took an active role in the new Dublin Corporation.

The Chamber of Commerce of Dublin was founded in 1783 for the purpose of competition against the Dublin Guilds by Catholics and Dissenters, who were not able to join the Irish Guilds. Concretely, they claimed "to protect its commercial interests", and interceded in negotiations

¹¹ A few Protestants approved the petition for the Repeal of the Union.

¹² John Tandy Boyce (Stephen's Ward: Landowner), Joseph Boyce (Andrew's Ward: Merchant), R. H. Kinahan (Merrion Ward: Landowner), Isaac Butt (George's Ward: Barrister at law), Peter Purcell (Post Office Ward: Owner of Hotel) and George Roe (James's Ward: Brewer), who was the Lord Mayor.

¹³ Thomas Radcliffe Symes (Merrion Ward: Attorney at law), Robert Rundell Guinness (Merrion Ward: Barrister at law), Fredrick Darley (St. Stephen's Ward: Architect), H. Thompson (St. Stephen's Ward: Merchant), Robert Symth (St. Andrew's Ward: Merchant), James Perry (Line Hall Ward: Merchant), Edward Hudson (St. George's Ward: Solicitor), George Thorp (St. George's Ward, Gentleman), Francis E. Thomas (St. George's Ward: Solicitor).

concerning the fee “usually paid to clerks and porters” and “the quays” (Wright, 1821, p. 326). The minute books of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin after 1821 exist in the National Archives of Ireland, and this makes it possible to study the body of Dublin merchants. According to the minute books, the number of members was 263 in 1821. However the number had increased to over 600 in 1840. The admission fee was one guinea and the membership fee was 30 shillings a year. In a report in 1840, they asked O’Connell to negotiate an issue concerning the repair of Dublin port with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of Treasury. This negotiation failed, but subsequently the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin became rapidly connected with O’Connell, and by 1843, O’Connell had joined the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin as a member. In 1847 O’Connell declared the Chamber to be “a large and most respectable body of manufacturers and traders, in consequence of an attempt of the old Trades’ Guilds of the city to exercise powers supposed to have been abolished.” (*Reports of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce to the Annual Assembly of the Member of Association, 1821-1851*)

In the Dublin Corporation of 1843, 10 of the 15 Aldermen and 17 of the 45 Town Councillors held positions as members or councillors of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin concurrently. All of them naturally agreed with the petition for the Repeal of the Union at the Dublin Corporation. For example, the Lord Mayor, George Roe, who ran a brewery and served as a councillor of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin, opposed the petition. The reason why he opposed it, he explained, was that “that house should not be converted into a political arena.” He supported the Repeal movement, but he did not wish to discuss the issue in the Dublin Corporation as the Lord Mayor. In total, three of the ten Aldermen and three Town Councillors who were members of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin opposed the petition (*Reports of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce to the Annual Assembly of the Member of Association, 1821-1851*) (Levy, 1843, p. 198) (*Dublin Council Minutes Book, 1843*).

Despite some members of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin opposing the petition in the Dublin Corporation, the Corporation adopted the petition. Moreover other Corporations in Ireland, such as Cork, Waterford, and Limerick, followed Dublin in adopting similar petitions (McCaffrey, 1966, p. 45). These petitions triggered the start of the Repeal Year. During this year, the Repeal Association succeeded in mobilising huge numbers of Repealers to participate in Repeal Meetings, called “Monster Meetings” in many parts of Ireland, though this finally concluded in the arrest of O’Connell and the headquarters of the Repeal Association.

In 1843, the Repeal Movement reached its first climax through the adoption of the petitions in the local corporations of Ireland. Although the Repeal Association failed to achieve the Repeal of the Union by mobilising the Monster Meetings, it did succeed in obtaining stable support in urban areas. In the Dublin Corporation, there were nine Town Councillors who opposed the petition. However, almost all of them had disappeared from the Corporation by 1846, other members of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin taking their place. The inhabitants of Dublin, especially Catholics, supported the Repeal Association, and their intentions were reflected in the Dublin Corporation elections. The Chamber of Commerce of Dublin, whose members were mainly Catholics and wealthy merchants, had become linked with the Dublin Corporation and O’Connell. As a result, in the early Repeal movement, Dublin Catholic merchants who were members of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin and who were supported by the Catholic inhabitants were one of the main proponents of the legislative independence of Ireland.

4. The Repeal Association and the Repeal Warden

When O'Connell led the reformation of the Irish Municipal Corporations to its successful conclusion, he also initiated action for organising the Repeal Association. However, all was not going well with the new association. McCaffrey points out that of the one hundred people in the audience, only fifteen new members took part in the first meeting of the Repeal Association (McCaffrey, 1963, p. 12). O'Connell, however, had received a different impression. He argued as follows.

The first announcement which I made of the Catholic rent in the old Catholic Association was only £4. The first announcement of the Repeal rent, after two days' meeting, amounts to no less than £44. That's a good beginning (*The Pilot*, April 20, 1840)

It is certain that the Repeal Association had difficulty gathering members and memberships at the beginning. However their opinions and policies for the Repeal of the Union were spread gradually by the publication of large numbers of pamphlets and by organising a system for collecting membership fees, named the Repeal Rent. In this chapter, we will take a look at the organisation of the Repeal Association and the system of Repeal Warden.

Firstly, we focus on the pamphlets published by the Repeal Association in order to assess their intentions and purposes. After the initial organisation, the Repeal Association published frequent reports. The reports were collected in two pamphlets (*First Series of Reports*, 1840) (*Second Series of Reports*, 1840). In these pamphlets, the Repeal Association insisted on the justice of the Repeal of the Union. In short, they emphasised the historical fact that every person who lived in Ireland opposed the act of Union around 1840. For example, they gave examples of about 40 petitions which appealed against the Union in the early 1800s as evidence. The petitions against the Act of Union consisted mainly of local corporations, especially in the County of Dublin (*Second Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 3-44).¹⁴ In addition, they pointed out that some Guilds, such as the Saint Luke of Dublin (*Second Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 6-19)¹⁵ and the Merchants and Bankers of Dublin (*Second Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 39-40), also declared opposition to the Act of Union. Moreover, in the *Second Series*, there were three petitions against the Union collected by the Orange Lodge. The Orange Lodge was an institution funded by the Orangemen, who were Protestants professing anti-Catholicism. They began at the end of the 18th century, but also objected to the Act of Union at the beginning (*Second Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 40-42).¹⁶

The point of the Repeal Association was that the oppositional forces against the Act of Union were not only Irish Catholics, but also Anglo-Irish. The Repeal Association thus insisted that Protestants should join the Repeal movement. In fact, O'Connell called for Protestants and Dissenters to take part in the Association as an Irish Nation (*First Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. vi). In addition, O'Connell presented his vision of an Ireland after the repeal of the Union. He idealised the Grattan Parliament, which was the Irish parliament in the period between the achievement of legislative independence and the Act of Union. He regarded it as the golden age of prosperity through self-government. Moreover, he referred to the "Dungannon Convention", which was a

¹⁴ These articles were entitled 'Report of the Committee of the Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland, upon the Resolutions Passed at the Period of the Union, Against that Measure' and 'Report of the Committee of the Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland, upon the Resolutions Passed at the Period of the Union, against that Measure.'

¹⁵ Concerning the Guild of Saint Luke, I have gained valuable suggestions from the following book (Clark, 1993, pp. 19-20).

¹⁶ Concerning the activities of Orangemen in Ulster, see Farrell, 2000, pp. 50-64.

meeting opened by Volunteers from Ulster. O'Connell presumed it to open the way to legislative independence (*First Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 77-122).¹⁷ In brief, he attempted to summon the next "Convention" for the reconstruction of the Irish Parliament. O'Connell regarded the Repeal movement as a way of assembling a national convention at that moment.

Moreover he planned the outline of an Irish Parliament which had a House of Commons and a House of Lords. The prescribed number of seats in the House of Commons was three hundred. Later, this number became one of the symbols of the Repeal movement, known as the "Council of three hundred". O'Connell then made mention of the electoral franchise, as follows.

"It is proposed that the right of voting should be what is called 'Household suffrage,' requiring six months' residence in the counties, with the additions in the towns of married men resident for twelve months, whether householders or not. (*Second Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 45-55)"¹⁸

This regulation was certainly limited to only "men" and "householders". but it contained no restrictions by property or religion, and we can consider it as a progressive type of electoral franchise for this era.

Secondly, we focus on the subjects who were expected to participate in the Repeal Association. In the pamphlets, the association protested about various kinds of "injustice" toward Ireland. For example, it presented several issues which should be resolved, such as "upon The Financial Injustice inflicted on Ireland, since the Union" (*First Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 57-76), "Taxation" (O'Connell, 1843), "Commerce" (O'Connell, 1843), "Fisheries" (*Second Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 45-59)¹⁹ and "Woollen, Silk and Cotton Manufactures of Ireland" (*Second Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 85-120).²⁰ In these reports, the association indicated that the Act of Union caused the decline of Irish industries. It claimed that Ireland needed to introduce some protection for trade with the United Kingdom in order to promote Irish industries. For that purpose, it demanded the reconstruction of an Irish Parliament for amending the laws which restrained the liberty of Ireland, codifying the laws which would promote Irish industries and achieving definite "Justice for Ireland". For that reason, it claimed the importance of the Repeal of the Union. The issue of Repeal was the fundamental political problem. However the Repeal Association was able to connect this with complaints concerning the Irish economy. As a result, the Repeal Association succeeded in gaining sympathy from the urban middle classes, especially the merchants in Dublin.

Thirdly, Irish people, especially the urban middle classes, supported the Repeal movement and joined the Repeal Association. Let us now consider how the Repeal Association organised their supporters, named Repealers, and the system of collecting membership fees, named Repeal Rents.

At the beginning, O'Connell proposed to divide membership into two categories. He defined an ordinary membership as a "Member" who should subscribe one pound a year. This, however, was very expensive for ordinary people, so he prepared a lower-priced membership named "Associate", who should pay one shilling per year or one penny per month. However "Associate" was immediately renamed "Repealer" and the usage of "Repealer" spread as a synonym which

¹⁷ This article was entitled 'Report of the Committee of the National Association of Ireland, on the determination shewn by the Irish People, to Maintain the Free Constitution of Ireland, as evinced by the sunjoined series of Resolutions of the Volunteers of 1782'.

¹⁸ This article was entitled 'Report of the Committee of the National Association of Ireland, to whom it was referred to suggest a proposal, to be converted into a Law, for the Re-Construction of the House of Commons of Ireland'.

¹⁹ This article was written by John Jagoe as 'Report of the Committee of the Loyal National Repeal Association of Ireland of the Fisheries of Ireland'.

²⁰ T. M. Ray wrote this article entitled 'Report of the Committee of the Loyal Repeal Association of Ireland on the Disastrous Effects of the Union on the Woollen, Silk, and Cotton Manufactures of Ireland'.

indicated the entire membership of the Repeal association (*The Pilot*, April 20, 1840) (*First Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 4-6).

Until 1841, the Repeal association provided for a superior membership above “Member”. It was named “Volunteer”, and the subscription was “ten pounds in a year” or “one shilling in a year and collecting ten pounds from the Repealers as Repeal Rents in a year” (Loyal National Repeal Association, 1843, p. 2). The Repeal association looked to “Volunteers” to organise local “Repealers” in their local area. For example, in 1841, Charles Gavan Duffy,²¹ who latter started the largest Irish newspaper *The Nation* in the 1840s, but who at this time worked as a journalist on the Belfast newspaper the *Belfast Vindicator*, reported his activities in Belfast to O’Connell. Duffy wrote that he collected 45 pounds and invited 500 people to join the Repeal Association. For this reason, he sued O’Connell for enrolling him as a “Volunteer” (*O’Connell Papers*) (O’Connell, 1980, pp. 39-40).

Finally, let us examine the collection system of the Repeal Rents. At the beginning, the Repeal Association put a special emphasis on providing a service for the Repealers as well as collecting the Repeal Rents. In April 1840, provided a local parish could assemble two hundred Repealers, the Repeal Association donated a weekly newspaper to the local parish free of charge (*First Series of Reports*, 1840, pp. 4-6). However, when the pamphlet concerning Repeal Rents was published in 1843, the Repeal Association continued to establish a system of collecting the Repeal Rents.

The Repeal Association expected the Repeal Wardens to be the main actors in organising the local institution in their local areas. The Association thought that local clergy could take the main role in appointing the Repeal Warden in their parish. For example, it defined this process by stating that, “They should enjoy the respect of their clergy, let them be of what religious denomination they may”, and “we recommend, and indeed the wisest and best, is, to have proper and efficient persons recommended to the Association by the parochial Clergy, for the various streets, townlands, or other districts, into which their parishes are to be divided”. If local clergy could not be involved in appointing the Repeal Warden, he should then be recommended at a public meeting (Loyal National Repeal Association, 1843, pp. 2-6).

Let us look next at the roles of the Repeal Warden. In the pamphlet, it defined eleven duties. In brief, the Repeal Association required that the Repeal Warden collect the Repeal Rents in their local district, send reports about their local activities and petitions and receive the newspapers sent from the Repeal Association free of charge. They should prepare the meeting room and manage loans of the newspapers and books in the meeting room (Loyal National Repeal Association, 1843, pp. 7-11).

Later, these duties of the Repeal Warden concerning the newspapers led to the founding of reading rooms. For example, in 1843 *The Nation* notified readers of a donation of “London, Dublin and Provincial papers” which came to their office to local “Popular Reading Societies” (*The Nation*, March 4, 1843). Two weeks later, on 18th March, *The Nation* published an article which named ‘Popular Reading Societies’ again. In this article, the editor of *The Nation* could not hide his surprise since the number of applications taking up this offer was a success beyond their expectations. He stated that, “We cannot think of refusing any of them; and, at some inconvenience, we intend to furnish one or two Papers weekly to all the Societies” (*The Nation*, March 18, 1843).²² Following this, *The Nation* and the Repeal Association began to support the activities of local reading rooms.

Marie-Louise Legg defines five motives of Reading Rooms in nineteenth century Ireland. In her categories, the fourth category was “the common desire to create a measure of civic and national pride”, and an “impulse behind the founding of reading rooms by the movements for temperance

²¹ Charles Gavan Duffy (1816-1903) was born in Monaghan. He worked with the *Northern Herald*, *Dublin Morning Register*, and *Belfast Vindicator* before establishing *The Nation*. After the state trial, he was jailed with other Repeal leaders.

²² Totally 38 local reading rooms were listed in this article.

and repeal". In addition to that, she gives the fifth category as "the need to foster the spirit of nationalism". On the basis of her categories, she examines the activities of Kilkenny Circulating-Library Society (Legg, 1999, pp. 109-123). In fact, Kilkenny was one of the most active areas for establishing Repeal Reading Rooms. Moreover, Kilkenny Repealers took a key role in establishing the rules of Repeal Reading Rooms.

In 1844, the Repeal Association established a committee to arrange a plan for forming reading rooms (*The Nation*, August 17, 1844). It referred to the cases of local Repeal Wardens founding reading rooms in Kilkenny and Waterford.²³ At the end of this year, the Repeal Association announced a plan for "Repeal Reading Rooms" (*The Nation*, November 30, December 7, 1844). The Repeal Association revised this plan, since some local Repealers demanded modifications to it. Early the following year, the secretary of the Repeal Association, T. M. Ray published a pamphlet entitled "Rules for the Establishment of Repeal Reading Rooms". In this pamphlet, he defined the Repeal Reading Rooms as the centre of the Repeal movement in the local area. He then expected the Repeal Warden to be the main actor for establishing and managing the Repeal Reading Room and collecting the Repeal Rents through the system of the reading room (Ray, 1845)²⁴ (*The Nation*, October 26, 1844; January 18 and April 19, 1845).

Although the Repeal Reading Rooms spread over the whole of Ireland, the areas in which they were established were mainly urban areas. It was certain that the Repeal Association, from the first, thought that the Repeal Wardens and the Parish Clergy led "intelligent farmers, traders, and mechanics" to educate and encourage the undertaking of positive activities for the Repeal Association (*The Nation*, October 26, 1844). It regarded "mechanics" as especially important. For instance, *The Nation* had already mentioned the importance of mechanics for founding the Reading Rooms in 1843. It stated that

In towns where the intelligent operative classes pull cheerfully together, the establishment of a news-room is a matter of no difficulty – it needs only one resolute man to effect it anywhere; a trifle from his Saturday night's pay defrays the weekly subscription of each reader; and there is certainly no town in Ireland where twenty members could not be had to contribute that trifle. (*The Nation*, March 18, 1843)

On the other hand, it was difficult to establish a repeal reading room in rural areas because the literacy rate in most areas of Ireland was low. For example, in Munster the literacy rate for men was 47.9%, and that for women was 28.3%. However Dublin and County Antrim, which included Belfast, were exceptions. In Dublin, the rate for men was 79% and that for women was 70%. In County Antrim, the rate for men was 85.4% and that for women was 77.1% ("The Census 1841") (ÓCiosáin, 1997, p. 35). In some parts of Ireland, such as Belfast and Dublin, the literacy rate was high, but even in areas where the literacy rate was high more education in English was still required, since only a few people could read. We can consider that reading rooms were required as an educational institution by members of the urban lower middle class, such as mechanics.

For these reasons, we can consider that the Repeal Reading Rooms spread only over limited urban areas in the mid-1840s. Thus the Repeal Association was able to found an organic-system by use of the Repeal Wardens in only urban areas. From 1845 the Repeal movement shifted from a mass mobilized movement, represented by the Monster Meetings in 1843, to an urban political movement.

²³ *The Nation*, 23 November, 1844.

²⁴ This report about the Repeal Reading Rooms stated that "There ought to be reading-rooms in every parish which contributes systematically to the Repeal Rent."

At the same time, the Repeal Association introduced a further reformation plan. It was called the “’82 Club” and was planned mainly by Thomas Davis and Smith O’Brien²⁵ (Mitchel, 2005, p. 124). The “’82” meant the year of 1782, in which the Grattan parliament was opened. It aimed to construct friendship between Catholics and Protestants (*The Nation*, September 14 and 21, 1844). The first meeting of the ’82 Club was held on 2nd January, 1845, rules being adopted at this meeting. In the rules, the annual subscription was given as one guinea. O’Connell was selected as the first president (*Minutes book about the ’82 Club*).

In *The Nation*, they defined the purpose of the club as, “[The ’82 Club] will bring within its circle the intelligence, rank, and wealth of the Repeal body; and will yet form a point of junction between the extreme Protestants and their Catholic countrymen.” In addition, they explained this “junction” as follows:

“It is observable that of the five Vice-Presidents three of them are Protestants, and of the three Secretaries one is a Protestant. Several of the most active is working out the organisation of the Club of Protestants. We state those facts to justify our assertion, that the principles of the Eighty-two Club will be of the most liberal description - that the requisites looked to in their members are liberality to men of all creeds, enlightened patriotism, and the adoption and advocacy of National opinions.” (*The Nation*, January 18, 1845)

This aim of the junction between Protestants and Catholics was seen as successful. At first, the club numbered nearly 100 members. This increased to 222 by the end of 1845 and to 245 in the spring of 1846 (Brodrick, 1846, pp. 1-7). The club imitated the National Convention of 1782, so the objective number was 300. From this point of view, we can consider that the ’82 Club seemed to find success in some degree.

The ’82 Club gathered members from all parts of Ireland. For example, as Catherine Hirst notes, some Belfast Repealers joined the ’82 Club (Hirst, 2002, p. 55). However the majority of the members were linked with Dublin. There were 24 members from the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin and 21 members from the Dublin Corporation. Thus in the middle Repeal movement, the centre of the movement shifted to Dublin.

The ’82 Club held a huge demonstration in Dublin in May, 1845. This was the best example for explaining the shift of the centre of the Repeal movement. This demonstration, named the “National Levee”, commemorated the release of O’Connell and the headquarters of the Repeal Association. The ’82 Club held a meeting at the Rotunda, at which, according to a later pamphlet, there were 1000 gentlemen and 2500 sightseers present (A Member of the Irish Press, 1845. p. 4). Following that, they held a parade through Dublin with delegations from Irish Corporations such as Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Kilkenny, and Dublin Merchants including Dublin Guilds. According to *The Nation*, the number of participants in the parade was estimated at 200,000 (*The Nation*, May 31, 1845). This number stood comparison with the Repeal Monster Meetings in 1843.

In middle Repeal movement, Protestant elites such as Thomas Davis and Smith O’Brien took the initiative. They cooperated with the Catholic middle classes, especially Dublin Merchants, to reform the Repeal Association. They shifted the methods of the movement from mobilising large numbers of people at their meetings to establishing local and centre organisations such as Repeal Reading Rooms and the ’82 Club.

However these reformations of the Repeal Association would collapse by the end of 1845.

²⁵ William Smith O’Brien (1803-1864) was born in Dromoland Castle, Ennis, Co. Clare. He was educated at the University of Cambridge and entered Parliament as a Tory Emancipationist MP for Ennis from 1828-31, and for Co. Limerick in the period 1835-49. He joined the Loyal National Repeal Association in 1843.

There were mainly two reasons for this collapse. The first was the discussion of “mixed education” at the new Irish University. The second was the death of Thomas Davis.

5. Dublin Remonstrance.

The year of 1845 was one of the turning points of the Repeal Movement. There were mainly two reasons for this. One was a discord between O’Connellites and the group concerned with *The Nation*, which was represented by Thomas Davis. This discord arose in a Repeal meeting in May 1845, at which the Repeal Association discussed a method of religious education in the new Irish Universities which had been introduced in parliament as a “Province College Bill”. This act aimed to establish three Universities in each Irish province except Leinster, because that province already had Trinity College, founded by Queen Elizabeth I in 1591, and Maynooth College, founded for Irish Catholics, and was considered by parliament for an increase in funding. Almost all Irish people welcomed the bills, except for the religious education. Parliament considered the importation of the model of London University, which permitted registry without religious restrictions (*The Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1845, pp. 636-7) (*Hansard’s*, vol. LXXXI, pp. 1035-1104. vol. LXXXII, pp. 321-379).

The Nation, particularly Thomas Davis, was in favour of the parliamentary plan. He wrote several articles on “mixed education” in *The Nation* (*The Nation*, May 17 and 31, 1845) (Sloan, 2000, p. 128). On the other hand, the Catholic clergy reacted against Davis’s opinion. They held a meeting to orchestrate their opinion of the new colleges. They demanded education by Catholic methods and the hiring of Catholic professors for courses (Duffy, 1881. pp. 713-4). While the clergy regulated the opinions of Irish Catholics, they frequently condemned the attitude of Davis and *The Nation*, which had begun from the autumn of 1844, as un-Catholic and infidel (Duffy, 1881, p. 613) (Mulvey, 2003, p. 169). O’Connell also censured Davis and *The Nation* for holding certain “hypocritical” ideas (O’Connell, 1980, Vol. VII, pp. 286-8). He certainly stood for Irish Catholics and regarded the Catholic clergy as the most important actors for achieving the Repeal of the Union after 1843.

However the debate between O’Connell and Davis was concluded through mediation by Smith O’Brien, who described himself as “middle aged Ireland”, and took up a position between them (*The Nation*, May 31, 1845) (*The Times*, May 29, 1845). After O’Brien’s mediation, friction did not come to surface in 1845. In particular, after the autumn of 1845, it seemed that the Repeal Association had promoted their solidarity. The reason was that Thomas Davis unexpectedly died from illness. *The Nation* and the Repeal Association honoured Davis’s activities till 1846, because Davis had become one of the leading theoreticians of the Repeal movement. As a result, the movement lost its way for the Repeal of the Union, and this was one further reason for the turning of the Repeal movement.

In 1846, the situation for the Repeal Association changed. The British Parliament introduced an Irish Coercion Bill into the House of Commons. Following this, parliament detained O’Brien on a charge of being guilty of contempt of the House. He was simply absent from the Railway Committee without leave (Sloan, 2003, p. 149) (Gwynn, 1949, pp. 59-62) (O’Connell, 1980, Vol. VIII, pp. 15-6). The Repeal Association was confused as to how to act. O’Connell could not work on parliament to release O’Brien because he was concerned about the influence this might have on the Irish Coercion Bill. However, Young Irelanders blamed O’Connell for not approaching parliament regarding O’Brien’s release. Finally O’Connell brought a motion for the release of O’Brien, but this was rejected on 22nd May. Fredrick Shaw also brought a similar motion before

parliament on 25th May. This was adopted, and O'Brien was discharged. As a result, O'Connell lost his centripetal force in the Repeal Association, because O'Brien had striven for the release of O'Connell under an amnesty in 1844. Moreover O'Connell decided again to contract an alliance with the Liberals in order to inhibit the adoption of the Irish Coercion Bill (*Hansard's*, LXXXVII, pp. 966-1031).

This was an indirect cause of the "Peace Resolution", under which the Young Irelanders withdrew from the Repeal Association. The resolution was adopted at the Repeal Meeting at the end of July, 1846. However, it was simply a ceremony, since friction had already surfaced before the meeting. The Repeal Association could not be rehabilitated. A close study of the circumstances of the friction in the Repeal Association between the O'Connellites and the Young Irelanders is not necessary for our purpose. We would rather look to the reaction over the secession of the Young Irelanders by Dublin inhabitants.

After the "Peace Resolution", O'Connell prohibited the Repeal Reading Rooms from subscribing to *The Nation*. In addition, O'Connell ordered a Dublin Town Councillor who supported the Repeal Association to inspect the degree to which Dublin inhabitants in his local district felt sympathy for the Young Irelanders (O'Connell, 1980, Vol. VIII, pp. 101-3). O'Connell watched out for any plots against him and the Repeal Association because *The Nation* and Young Irelanders had a strong connection with the Repeal Reading Rooms. Dublin Repeal Reading Rooms were mostly fairly small and not sufficiently rich to have a good book collection. As a result, they depended on *The Nation*, because this newspaper was provided free of charge from the Repeal Association. Therefore Dublin Repeal Reading Rooms and the Repeal Wardens who supervised these rooms repelled O'Connell's decision.

Signs of the opposition by the Repealers came to the surface in the form of decreasing income from the Repeal Rent in the autumn of 1846. Before July 1846, the average income from the Repeal Rent was nearly 200 pounds per week, but this decreased to 60 pounds at the end of September. Moreover, this decrease continued until at a Repeal Meeting at the end of November the Repeal Association announced the sum of the Repeal Rent as approximately 45 pounds a week.

What was the reason for the decrease in the Repeal Rent? The cause was that collecting the Repeal Rent became difficult in the Repeal Reading Rooms. "Trades of Dublin" made their sentiments known in *The Nation*. They said that "in the most populous wards of Dublin", it was hard to collect the Repeal Rent, which began to "fall to a few shillings". So they lent "the Repeal Rent" to the Repealers who had joined the local Repeal Reading Rooms. They implored the Repeal Association to reverse the order inhibiting subscription to *The Nation*, and the expulsion of the Young Irelanders, but this was rejected by the Repeal Association. "Trades of Dublin" therefore planned to hold a meeting named "the Friends of Freedom of Opinion, who dissent from the recent proceedings in the Conciliation Hall" in order to collect a petition to present to the Repeal Association. However the Repeal Association threatened to disrupt the meeting. It worked on a number of Dublin Town Councillors to discredit the meeting and went to the meeting place with a number of "coal-porters", and "surrounded the door, and by force and violence, prohibited ingress to the rooms." As a result, "Trades of Dublin" could not collect the petition to the Repeal Association. They therefore announced that they would initiate remonstrance against the Repeal Association, and appealed for "the Repeal Wardens and Trades of Dublin" to join the movement (*The Nation*, October 3, 1846).

The article in *The Nation* awakened a response in the Repealers, especially in the Repeal Wardens in Dublin. From the next issue of *The Nation*, articles on the remonstrance, which was called the "Dublin Remonstrance", was carried with a list of petitioners. Statements by nine delegates of the districts of Dublin appeared in *The Nation* of 10th October. In the next issue, there

were statements by delegates from England, such as London, Liverpool and Leeds, who also expressed dissatisfaction with the Repeal Association. These feature articles continued for nearly one month. Finally, a total of more than 1000 Repealers joined the Dublin Remonstrance and withdrew from the Repeal Association. In addition, 74 Dublin Repeal Wardens, from a total number of 120, took similar action (*The Nation*, October 10, 24 and 31, 1846).

The list of participants in the Dublin Remonstrance contained the participants' names and addresses. This was very valuable information for researching the occupations of the Repeal Wardens. I take as an example Edward Brennan, one of the Repeal Wardens of St. George's Ward, Dublin. He not only took the role of supervising the Repeal Wardens in this area, but also ran a grocery shop in Lower Dorset Street (*The Nation*, October 10, 1846) (*The Dublin Almanac 1843*, p. 678). Thus the mass of the Repeal Wardens in Dublin were specified in their occupation as merchants (Hill, 1973, pp. 290-291).²⁶ In addition, they lived on both sides of the River Liffy and the south-west area of Dublin. The inhabitants who lived in those areas were mainly Catholics. However, few of these were members of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin. Thus we can consider that the Repealers who joined the Dublin Remonstrance were mainly Catholics, but were not sufficiently wealthy to take part in the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin.

From November 1846, Young Irelanders cooperated with the participants in the Dublin Remonstrance to organise a new organisation for repeal of the Union. In December, they held a preparatory meeting. According to a pamphlet, there were "600 gentlemen and ladies" with "upwards of 2000 of the most intelligent of the artisan and trading classes" gathered at the meeting (*Proceedings of the Young Ireland Party*, 1846, p. 1). Following this, in January 1847, they founded a new organisation named the "Irish Confederation". At the first meeting of the Irish Confederation, O'Brien gave an address expressing gratitude toward the "Dublin Remonstrators" and ex-Repeal Wardens. He promised that the Irish Confederation would invite them into the organisation as councillors (*The Nation*, January 23, 1847).

Moreover, ex-Repeal Wardens played a major role in establishing the local organisation of the Irish Confederation. In March, the Irish Confederation advocated a plan for National Reading Rooms, which was a succession to the Repeal Reading Rooms. In fact, on the same day, the first National Reading Room, named the Davis Reading Room, was established in Dublin. The room had originated as a Repeal Reading Room (*The Nation*, March 6, 1847). The Davis Reading Room became the model for the Confederate Club, which was adopted as the institution for the local organisation in July 1847 (*The Nation*, July 3, 1847).²⁷ The Confederate Clubs as well as the Repeal Reading Rooms were founded and managed by ex-Repeal Wardens.

On the other hand, only a few members of the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin and the Dublin Corporation, who had been key actors in the Repeal movement, joined the council of the Irish Confederation (*The Nation*, January 23, 1847). Until O'Connell's death in 1847, they would rarely participate in the organisation. After that time, they merely established a small group named the "Trades and Citizens Committee" with some members of the Irish Confederation for mediating with the Repeal Association (*Hudson Papers*).²⁸

In the late Repeal movement, the influence of the Repeal Association declined. On the other hand, the Irish Confederation was founded by Young Irelanders and ex-Repeal Wardens increased its influence in the Repeal movement. From the point of view of Dublin Merchants, the subjects of

²⁶ Hill specifies the occupation of the participants of the Dublin Remonstrance by *Thom's Irish Almanac 1844-50*. Since the number of merchants including food trades, clothing trades, luxury trades and service trades was over 400, she emphasises the role of merchants in the Dublin Repeal Movement.

²⁷ In this year, the Irish Confederation published two pamphlets for organising new Confederate Clubs.

²⁸ However, Dublin Castle observed the Trades and Citizens Committee through a spy. The report from the spy can be found in Trinity College Dublin. (*Reports of Government Agent*)

the Repeal movement shifted from wealthy merchants who were members of the Dublin Corporation and Chamber of Commerce of Dublin to the merchants who acted as Repeal Wardens, but were not able to join the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin or Dublin Corporation.

6. Conclusion

On the eve of the rising of 1848, the number of Dublin Confederate Clubs had increased to 55 (*Minutes books about Irish Confederation*). A spy infiltrated one of the Dublin Confederate Clubs, "Garryowen's Club" and reported the occupations of the members to the Dublin Metropolitan Police. According to the report, almost all the members were merchants or artisans (*Reports of Government Agent*). It is certain that the Repeal movement was transformed by the influence of the European Revolutions of 1848 and by British Chartism, but from the beginning to the end one of the subjects of the Repeal movement was Dublin merchants. They played a major role in the actives of the Dublin Confederate Clubs under suppression by the Dublin Metropolitan Police, Dublin Castle and the British Parliament.

Through the Repeal movement from 1840 to 1848, we can consider that Irish Catholics mainly supported the Repeal Association. Especially in Dublin, wealthy Catholic merchants played an important role in the early and middle Repeal movement. After the reformation of the Irish Municipal Corporations, they had enough influence to control the Dublin Corporation with Daniel O'Connell. In the middle Repeal movement, the members of the Dublin Corporation or Chamber of Commerce of Dublin joined together to form an aristocratic association, the '82 Club. They were regarded as prospective members of an Irish Parliament after achievement of the Repeal of the Union. To them, Repeal of the Union meant growing commercial interests. They thus supported the movement and acted as one of its subjects.

After the secession in 1846, however, some Dublin Catholic merchants shifted to become collaborators for the Irish Confederation, but the wealthier merchants maintained their support for the Repeal Association. They did not act in a key role for the movement after 1846. Of course, they gradually approached the Irish Confederation through the Trades and Citizens Committee after the death of O'Connell in 1847. They continued to be interested in the Repeal movement, but did not wish to see the Irish Confederation flourish, wishing only that it should integrate with the Repeal Association.

On the other hand, the lower middle class Catholics who had served as Repeal Wardens chose the Irish Confederation. They attempted to found the Confederate Club as a substitute for the Repeal Reading Rooms in their local areas, but could not act in the Rising of 1848, since under the oppression, the Irish Confederation had lost any effective connection with the Confederate Clubs before the eve of the Rising.

In 1849, when the arrests of 1848 were judged, the Dublin Corporation considered the adoption of a petition for their release, but it was finally amended due to their passion for achieving the Repeal of the Union having already been lost (*Dublin City Council Minutes*, 1849, p. 508).

Although the Repeal movement ended in 1848, we can consider that it represented the rise of the Catholic middle class in Ireland after the reformation of the Irish Corporations. On the other hand, we can see that lower middle class merchants were also capable of an intention for reforming their society by participating in the political movement, especially after 1846. This was a preparation for succeeding movements, such as the Fenian movement, and we can also consider it to have been the origin of the Irish nation.

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